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CHAPTER V

THE LAOTIAN PRINCIPALITIES FROM 1707 TO 1836

Political situation of the Indo-Chinese peninsula at the dawn of 175*
the eighteenth century. As of the date which we have now reached, the political map of the Indo-Chinese peninsula had undergone profound modifications in the last three hundred years if we consider the limits assigned to the various Thai kingdoms which issued forth from Khoun-Borom's partitioning. Under the impulse of dynastic ambitions, the latter tried in their turn to dominate their neighbors, and the most fortunate among them became surrounded with vassal principalities which, so to speak, served the purpose of buffer states and passed from one hand to another according to the whims of fortune.

Lan-Xang had had its life. Having lost its independence and its 633
unity, it was to disappear as a state which was the embodiment of 175*
great and powerful suzerainty and which had long been solidly based in the Mekong valley on the traditional alliance /138/ with the Kmer kingdom, then in full decline itself, and the Siamese and Annamites were to divide the spoils.

Tran-Ninh, which had endured the Laotian protectorate with 636
impatience ever since Souligna's expedition, was to profit by the 648*
circumstances in order to enter into open struggle with the kings of Vientiane. The latter would still be strong enough for another century to extract payment of their tribute by means of repeated expeditions, but the result of these perpetual hostilities would be to throw the princes of Xieng Khouang into the arms of the Annamite suzerain, who was to impose the most severe of dominations on them.

The Burmese empire was no more than a glorious memory. The 175*
land of the Irrawaddy, unified in the eleventh century, disjointed 101
in the thirteenth and regrouped in the sixteenth by Bureng-Naung, had since the conqueror's death again been divided into two enemy kingdoms, Burma in the north and Pegou in the south. With the same language, the same civilization and subject to the same influences, the two twin States were all the more eager to combat one another and no one could possibly have foreseen the end of this long duel even at the very moment (1710) when the Burmese hero Alompra was born, who was to reimpose unity and fill the peninsula with the clash of his arms in his turn.

to Chao-Noi to deliver the fugitive up to him as soon as he entered 648*
Chao-Noi's States. 175*

The only alternative was an unpleasant one for the king of Xieng-Khouang, who doubtless regretted, although somewhat tardily, that he had not given more support to his neighbor when there was perhaps still time. To give Anou up would be to expose himself to reprisals from their common suzerain the emperor of Annam, while to conceal his presence in his domain was surely to draw down the immediate wrath of Siam.

Captivity and death of Anou (1831-1835). Losing his head, he 727
met the most immediate threat by arresting Anou and holding him 643*
prisoner in /176/ Muong-Soui until the arrival of the Siamese en- 175*
voy, a Lu chieftain named Chao-Nan (1). The vanquished king

1. Up until the end of the eighteenth century the Lus formed /563/
an important group in the kingdom of Xieng-Kheng. Their /636/
chieftain, the Chao-Fa, who was then a tributary of Burma, had his residence at Muong-Sing. After Phia-Tak's victories over the Burmese, certain Lu families served the Siamese while others dispersed in the mountains of Luang-Prabang and Xieng-Mai and the Chao-Fa settled in Muong-You to remain under the protection of the king of Burma. See below, Chapter VIII, p. 331 (question of the Sip-Song-Panas), and 355.

was put in golden chains and sent on a richly caparisoned elephant to Bangkok, where he found a luxurious prison which had been prepared to receive him (1831). He remained there for four years and died in circumstances which have remained mysterious (2).

2. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, op. cit. /"Le Tran-Ninh historique." Revue indochinoise, Hanoi, 1896./ Some accounts claim that he poisoned himself. Mgr. Pallegoix relates that he was placed in an iron cage and exposed to the insults of the populace, and that he succumbed to the bad treatment which he had to endure.

Destruction of the kingdom of Vientiane. Siam made an ordi- 727
nary Siamese province out of the old kingdom of Vientiane, a kind 175*
of military frontier land which it called "Lao Phoueun." It would /642/

579 ravaging the region of Dien-Bien-/246/ Phu as far as Muong-Ngoi.
563 King Oun-Kham was growing old and carefree and felt incapable,
727 when left entirely to his own resources, of calming the mortal dis-
175* quietude of his people. Thus Siamese agents, the number of whom
/648/* was constantly on the increase, were welcomed all along the Upper Mekong as the only protectors from whom effective aid could be expected.

● 636 Relations with the cantons of the Black River. The man Cam-
175* Sinh, who was of Chinese origin himself, was nevertheless a friend of the princes of Luang-Prabang, but he was then too preoccupied with driving the invaders out of his own domains to lend any support to his neighbor.

His remote ancestors were military mandarins in Quang-Si and had settled three hundred years previously in Muong-Lai, which they had pacified in behalf of the king of Anna. Their authority extended around Lai-Chau as far as Yunnan in the north and Muong Theng in the south (Dien-Bien-Phu, the legendary cradle of the Laotian race). At this time they had reached a peaceful agreement
/728/ with the kings of Lan-Xang, most likely Nokeo-Koumane or Thammi-Karath who had just /247/ shaken off the Burmese yoke (1) and who

1. See above, pp. 97 and 100.

were glad to give them charge of the "white" and "black" Thais of the region in exchange for a triennial payment of thirty-three taels of silver "and one horse" (2). Relations had subsequently become

2. Cf. the Chronicle of Muong-Lai given by Deo-van-Tri to Auguste Pavie in 1894.

completely friendly and trusting to such a degree that when Cam-Sinh was in conflict with several of his relatives around 1850 he had not hesitated to place two of his children, one of whom was Deo-van-Tri, in Souka-Seum's hands (3).

3. See above, p. 213, note.

669 Revolt of the Khas of Muong-Ngoi (1876). It was not until 1876,
175* after he had temporarily driven back the Yellow Flags, that he was
563 able to send any reinforcements to Oun-Kham to sustain the struggle

departed... tranquillity was established to such a degree that one would have thought the recent past was quite remote." 654 648* 175*

Submission of Deo-van-Tri (April 1890). He met Deo-van-Tri on April 7. Under his proud exterior, the heir of the great feudal lords of the Thai cantons could not conceal /295/ his feelings of deep emotion and gratitude from the liberator of his family, and Pavie knew that this old adversary of his country was henceforth won over for good and all. As the first proof that he had rallied to the French cause, Deo-van-Tri gave him the seal which had been delivered to the sovereigns of Laos by China and stolen by his own Hos when Luang-Prabang was sacked (1), then he returned some thirty 175* 636

1. See above, p. 191, note 1. Pavie writes in Vol. II, p. 21: "It (the seal) constitutes a document establishing the vassaldom of this land (Luang-Prabang) to China, whose rights over it have become ours."

women and children from the Laotian capital who had been held captive ever since 1887. Finally, in "simple and worthy" language, he expressed his ardent desire to enter into active and devoted cooperation with the mission. During the days which followed he conversed at length of his family's past, of his own, of that of the cantons, of "the good which he saw could be done for the general prosperity of the region, of his campaigns with Luu-vinh-Phuoc, of his campaign in Luang-Prabang and his conduct towards the proscribed regent of Annam to whom he had been devoted in his misfortune and who, once he had reached safety thanks to him, had tried to have him massacred for fear that he might later reveal the secret of his sanctuary."

/296/ Pavie persuaded him without difficulty to accompany him as far as Theng, and their life together during five weeks was enough to ensure Deo-van-Tri's attachment to the French leader and his companions. Sure of him and certain that he had his confidence, even while journeying along Pavie commissioned him to organize administrative transports on the Black River and to make preparations for a voyage of exploration which he planned to make with him at the beginning of winter along the Yunnanese border and as far as the western frontier of the Sip-Song-Panas to fix the limits of the Thai cantons of the Upper Mekong where the last Chinese bands were still flourishing.

175* 636 Upon his departure from Muong-Lai he told him of his desire to go to Nam-Youn with the colonel and Lefevre-Pontalis to greet his old father Cam-Sinh and his mother, both of whom had been ill for some time now: "Both the family and the people," noted Pavie, "were infinitely grateful to us for this visit to the two old people whom death was to carry off shortly thereafter." It was there that on April 12, after the evening meal and before the ancestors' altar, Deo-van-Tri rose deeply moved in the midst of his own people and said:

"We shall be faithful to the kings of Annam. Anyone who loses the memory of good deeds becomes unhappy. Our bones shall be transformed into dust, /A photograph, unpaged, is inserted here between pp. 296 and 297: "Auguste Pavie (standing, third from the left)."--Translator/ /297/ but what shall never perish is the memory of this visit which you have made to our father in his home."

Deo-van-Tri was to keep this solemn promise loyally and was to remain until his death, which occurred in 1908, the most precious collaborator of the French in Tonkin, ensuring the security of the regions over which he had been given administration (1).

1. As he had promised, he guided Pavie, Lefevre-Pontalis and Vacle into the Sip-Song-Panas in January 1891, and by his knowledge of the country, his experience and his personal ascendancy over the natives greatly contributed to the expedition's success. Upon his return (in May) he became permanently reconciled at Van Bu with his old enemy the Quang-Phong, who had become the native leader of the upper Red River. Shortly thereafter he was made a chevalier of the Legion of Honor. In 1894 and 1895 his intelligent cooperation enabled the last Pavie mission to delimit the frontier with China in six months' time and to take part in all the studies going forward for a settlement with Britain. At the time of his death (at the age of fifty-eight) he had for eighteen years been maintaining at the Colonial School a group of his sons and nephews which he renewed every three years, as a mark of devotion and trust. It was the eldest of these children who succeeded him in 1908.

648* 175* Sojourn in Luang-Prabang (May-July 1890). On May 23 the mission's convoy landed in Luang-Prabang on the right bank, where the consular house which had in the meantime been completed by

Franco-Siamese treaty of October 7, 1902. Finally after more than three years of negotiations which were skilfully terminated in Paris by the Phyas Sri and Suriya, a new treaty was signed on October 7, 1902 by the terms of which we gave Siam back its liberty on the right bank of the river in exchange for the return to the French authorities of the territories of Melouprey and Tonle-Repou in Cambodia and of Bassac in Lower Laos. The king of Luang-Prabang obtained the frontier correction /343/ which he had been claiming for nine years, but we allowed Siam to retain the status of suzerain with respect to our protege as regarded this large part of his domains. As for our Asiatic nationals residing in Siam, we lost touch with them to such a degree that the revision of their lists was left to the entire discretion of the Siamese authorities. 648* 175*

This treaty provoked the sharpest and most fully justified protests on the part of the colonial group in the Chamber. How had the high competence of Auguste Pavie and the repeated advice of our successive ministers in Bangkok led the Quai d'Orsay to conclude a treaty which did not decide anything and which, in exchange for slight territorial satisfactions in the south, completely abandoned our influence over the whole Laotian right bank to the north of the Se-Moun? Under the pressure of parliament, which refused to ratify the treaty, the talks had to be resumed with more care given to "making our rights and interests respected."

Insurrection of the Khas of Lower Laos (1901-1907). The necessity for reaching some kind of agreement, however, was becoming all the more desirable on both sides in that Lower Laos had for /344/ about a year been the theater of an insurrection, as violent as it was singular, by the Khas on both banks of the Mekong. L K 669 175* 563

The fief of Bassac, which was administered by the descendants of Chao-Houy (1) in behalf of the king of Siam, had lost much of its L K /636/

1. See above, pp. 168; 177, note 2 and 328, note 1.

importance for the latter ever since the treaty of 1893 had amputated the muongs of Saravane and Attopeu. All this region, which was populated mainly by Khas (Boloven, Alak, Nha-Heun, on the left bank), had been only sparsely colonized by a few Phou-Thai and Laotian families, and Siamese domination over these tribes which were refractory to all authority had never been more effective than the purely nominal domination of the old kings of Vientiane (2).

2. See above, p. 90, the campaign of Setthathirath in

influence of any foreign propaganda and that their revolt did not at any time assume the character of an anti-French manifestation. Thus their uprising had no repercussions on the other ethnic groups in Laos, which in spirit and in deed stood behind our repressive measures. L M 563 669

They returned in peace to their agricultural labors (chiefly the cultivation of poppies) in their precipitous solitudes. A special administrative statute gave them the cantonal and communal autonomy which they desired, with no Laotian or Annamite intermediary. No matter how infrequent their contacts with the populations of the valleys and plains, it is quite certain that racial antagonism (exploited by agitators during the revolt) was maintaining a state of mind among their groupings which was suspicious and devoid of friendliness towards the native authorities. The reforms which were put into effect seem to have yielded good results. In the same way, a prudent policy towards the still unsubdued tribes of Lower Laos, one which will avoid direct conflict with their customs /362/ and prejudices, will gradually tame these last representatives of another age whom the opening-up of means of communication will finally incorporate into the larger Indo-Chinese family. L M 563 636 609 178 563

/ Pages 363-367 contain a Bibliography. Page 368 is blank. Pages 369-375 contain an Alphabetical Index of Names Mentioned. Page 376 is blank. --Translator/ 000

636.10 -----636.88

10: d'Orleans--362-363 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 276, 439, 655, 177.27 Siam
636.27

"... The opium monopoly has been set up in Luang Prabang by the Siamese. Not content with having, during the past century, ruined and depopulated the valley of the Mekong, and with weighing it down with taxation, they now seem anxious to crush its trade and arrest its growth. From our point of view, it is a matter of indifference to us if the relations between Luang Prabang and China become less close and friendly, and we may even turn this change to our profit, for the caravans which were wont to bring opium down the routes parallel with the Mekong, will find it answer [sic] their purpose to branch off in the direction of the Black River, and to effect their exchanges with Upper Tonkin.

I can answer for the fact that during the past year only one caravan reached Luang Prabang from the north, this consisting of sixty mules from Xieng [363] Hong, which took a month upon the journey by short stages, eight being loaded with iron, four with tea, and the rest with Chinese groceries, sugar, opium and a little silk."

10: d'Orleans--330 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 443, 651, 177.44 Siam
636.44

[LSS: in Luang Prabang] "In the market, each vendor has his own special stall, while the representatives of the same trade are all placed together, and a tax of twenty-five cowries is collected from each of them every morning by soldiers told off for the purpose, whereas the street hawkers are exempted from all dues."

10: d'Orleans--360 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 441, 563, 177.44 France
636.44

"The trade of Laos, like that of the greater part of Siam, is carried on by the Chinese, who form a sort of freemasonry among one another against the foreigner and are constantly pushing forward their advance posts. Masters of the Customs, more intelligent, more hard working, more temperate and more rapacious than the Siamese, they constitute the commercial class, and they have a way of insinuating themselves into the secrets of the natives and transferring their money into their own pockets which we neither could nor would wish to imitate. Our task is a higher one, and it consists, upon the one hand, in undertaking and carrying out such enterprises in the way of mining as I have described above, and upon the other in supplying the native or Chinese middlemen with the raw material and with our national goods upon as reasonable terms as English or German merchandise."

6: Goudal--32-33 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-1-3
116, 466, 651, 177.46 France
636.46

Laos. -- An Order of 12 May 1914 regulated labour dues for natives and assimilated Asiatics between 18 and 60 years of age who inhabit the territory of Laos.

Registered Laotians are required to provide 16 days' labour per annum, which may be commuted at the rate of 0.40 piastre, while 'Khas' must provide 20 days.

The commutation of labour dues is optional. Labour conscripts may only be recruited within a radius of 100 kilometres from the place of employment or at a maximum of five days' march for the outward and return journeys. No wages are paid for days thus worked, but each day taken up by the journey from the village to the place of work is paid at the rate of 30 cents. At least one-quarter of the labour called up must be employed solely on communal work. The commutation fee is fixed at 0.25 piastre.

An Order of 18 June 1929 increased the commutation fee to 0.30 piastre.

An important Circular issued on 21 June 1934 laid down the measures to be taken by the Residents in Laos to secure that the recruiting and employment of requisitioned labour should be carried out in the best conditions and with due attention to the requirements of health and hygiene.

6; Goudal--32-33 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-2
M6, 466, 651, 177.46 France
636.46

The recruitment of labour must be carried out with the greatest care and under the supervision and responsibility of the indigenous authorities. Sick and infirm persons, elderly persons and children may not be employed in any circumstances. When the workplace is far from the village, the workers must be carried in service lorries or canoes.

Before work is begun the encampments must be carefully organised. The workers' food must be the object of strict supervision, and every care must be taken to avoid victimisation of the workers by itinerant traders.

As a rule a dresser must be made responsible for the health in all workplaces employing at least 50 workers. The workers must be supplied with tools and implements so as to secure a maximum individual output.

In the management and organisation of workplaces, every effort must be made to co-ordinate administrative supervision, the work of the indigenous authorities and the technical instructions issued by the public works services.

It is thus clear that the regulation of labour dues has undergone practically the same evolution in all the countries of the Union. The old system of compulsory labour, which in theory was subject [33] to no restrictions, has been reduced to a reasonable number of days by the French authorities, while the work exacted from the inhabitants has been

restricted to the district in which the latter live, so as to avoid long absences from home and transfer to distant places. The regulations recommend the avoidance of mass levies likely to empty the villages of their able-bodied population, and discourage the requisitioning of labour during periods of agricultural activity. The introduction of certain measures for the protection of the workers' health (infirmaries in the work-places, etc.), together with the compulsory supply of appropriate tools and implements has certainly introduced a more humane element in the labour system. Finally, the general adoption of commutation fees has led to dues being treated as a tax (in three countries, the dues are included in the personal tax). Only for certain tribes in mountainous districts is the character of the former compulsory labour system still maintained."

6: Goudal--42-43 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians
116, 466, 482, 653, 177.46 France
636.46

"In Laos, the regulation of compulsory labour for public purposes has been the subject of a number of legislative measures, including an Order by the Senior Resident of 27 June 1933 which closely resembles that issued by the Governor-General of 5 February 1932.

Moreover, in the countries of the Union where this form of labour is still permitted, Orders are issued periodically establishing the [43] maximum weight of the load carried by porters and the rates of wages payable to such workers. Annual reports are also sent to the central administrative authorities on the value and usefulness of requisitioned labour. If the present effort made by the authorities is continued, it is practically certain that in the near future compulsory labour levies for transport work and large-scale public works will become a thing of the past."

6: Goudal--161-162 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-1-2
116, 466, 671, 177.46 France
636.46

"Laos--Sections 197-201 of the Laotian Civil Code provide for two methods of assessing workmen's compensation, according to whether the accident was or was not the consequence of an operation or dangerous work for which no special remuneration was laid down to offset the risk. If the accident is caused by dangerous work, the liability of the employer is regulated as follows: in the case of death or permanent total incapacity, the victim or his dependants are entitled, according to their situation, to an allowance amounting to 100 piastres for officials, 80 piastres for an employee of the administration or a skilled worker exercising a remunerative trade, and 50 piastres for all other workers.

These allowances are reduced to one-half or to one-quarter of the stated amount when the victim's working capacity is reduced, even permanently, by 50 or 25 per cent.

In case of temporary incapacity, the person liable in case of accident is required to pay as damages to the injured party the cost of the treatment entailed and in addition, throughout the whole period of incapacity, full wages in the case of an official, 0.55 piastre a day in the case of an employee of the administration or a skilled worker, and 0.25 piastre a day in the case of all other persons. [162]

All the above-mentioned allowances are reduced by one-half if the injured person is under age and has undertaken the operation or dangerous work with the authorisation of his parents.

6: Goudal--161-162 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-2
116, 466, 671, 177.46 France
636.46

Among other classes of work, the Civil Code classifies the following as dangerous: scaling of tall trees, going down wells or underground caves or passages, diving into a deep or rapidly flowing part of a river, the capturing of wild animals, the training of untamed animals, pursuit of criminals, etc.

When, on the other hand, the accident is not the result of dangerous work, but is nevertheless incurred in the course of, or arising out of, paid employment, the employer is required, in case of death or permanent incapacity, to pay to the victim an allowance equal to one-half of the corresponding indemnity established for injuries caused by dangerous work. In case of death he must also pay the cost of burial or cremation.

If the accident results in minor injuries, the employer must provide the injured person with medical attendance and food throughout the period of temporary incapacity.

Finally, in no case is the employer responsible for accidents resulting from unavoidable circumstances."

6: Goudal--166 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians
116, 466, 647, 177.46 France
636.46

"In Laos, no local labour inspectorate has so far been established. An Order of 22 December 1932 required the inspector of political and administrative affairs to carry out the duties of local labour inspector in addition to his own work. Subsequently, as the first-class administrator of the civil services who carried out these double duties was not replaced, the chief administrative officer of the Cammon province was entrusted with the duties of labour supervisor for all mining undertakings situated in his area.

It would seem that the cuts in the estimates, which led to a reduction in the staff of the various local inspectorates, have resulted in an unfortunate decline in the activity of these services. (1)

1. We read, for example, in the Annual Report of the Tonking Labour Inspectorate for the period 1 July 1933-30 June 1934: 'The attachment of the labour inspectorate to the Fifth Bureau has resulted in greatly reducing the sphere of activity of the labour inspector, whose time is mainly taken up by his duties as chief of the Bureau of Economic Affairs; his tours of inspection have thus been reduced to those which are strictly necessary'."

25: Brodrick--85 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
116, 131, 489, 177.48 France
636.48

"The Laos was, and indeed still is, a country happy in its isolation. It is land quite difficult of access. There are no railways. There is only one all-weather road crossing the country and that in the Lower Laos. Moreover, in my day, at least, that is to say on the very eve of the last World War, you did not just start off for the Laos as you would for any other part of Indo-China, discreet inquiries were made. The French liked to keep their Laos uncontaminated by foreigners.(1)

1. The total area of the Laos is just under 90,000 square miles and the population, at the last census, was just over one million. There is no all-weather road right up the Mekong Valley and the highways from the east cannot be used during the rains except for that across the Lower Laos from Dong-Ha to Kabao. Much of the Laos is, therefore, except for air-communication, cut off from the outer world for at least five months out of every year."

3: Robequain--94 S-5 (no date) 1944 Laotians
116, 496, 177.49 France
636.49

"Laos still lacks railways. Some years ago surveys were completed on the projected line from Tan Ap to Thakhek, which had been selected as the shortest and most convenient route between the coast of Annam and the Mekong. About twenty kilometers of rail were laid from Tan Ap as far as Xom Cuc, and téléférique built to hoist material and supplies from the workyards to Mu Gia Pass which will be traversed by a tunnel at an altitude of 370 meters; a service road was built in order to assure the easy maintenance of the téléférique. The roadbed beyond Thakhek was also started, but budgetary difficulties caused the stoppage of work."

23: Franck--346 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 491, 177.49 France
636.49

"Had it been in China or South America, this important trail between the two principal capitals of Laos would be impassable, in spots at least, which is the same thing so far as an overland trip is concerned, during the rainy season that was now upon us. Thanks to the few French overlords, however, mile after mile was welded together by many woven-bamboo bridges that sagged like bed-springs under our weight."

3: Robequain--113-116 S-5 (no date) 1944 Laotians-1-5
116, 133, 503, 505, 177.50 France
636.50

"The Mekong appeared to offer a splendid means of penetrating the plateaus and mountains of Laos. At one time it was even suggested that Saigon could be one of the great ports for Southern China. As early as 1866, the Doudart de Lagrée and Francis Garnier mission realized the difficulties[114]of navigating the river above Kratié. This large river, as a matter of fact, is still very young as far as physical geography is concerned, or rather, a series of recent and still only partially explained tectonic episodes have renewed its youth. It consists of a chain of calm-surfaced reaches, separated by rapids or falls. The chief obstacle to navigation is at Khône where the arms of the river, spread out over an area several kilometers wide, drop 15 meters through torrential and rock-studded channles or cataracts. Here precisely is the border between Cambodia and Laos. Other rapids are scattered both up and down stream, making navigation by launch difficult and uncertain throughout entire sections between Kratié and Savannakhet. It is only at Savannakhet ('the gateway to paradise') that the great navigable reaches begin which permit launches to sail as far as several kilometers above Vientiane without breaking bulk.

Europeans were eager to tame the Mekong. As early as 1890 the Messageries

3: Robequain--113-116 S-5 (no date) 1944 Laotians-2
116, 133, 503, 505, 177.50 France
636.50

Fluviales de Cochinchine had organized a steamship line which, with the help of some trans-shipment, operated as far as Khône. For more than two years the launch, Argus, tried to get past the Khône barrier through the channels which canoes sometimes used in descending the river. In view of the failure of these attempts, a narrow guage railway was built across Khône Island, and by this means gunboats and then launches were carried to the upper river in 1893.

Conditions of navigation have been improved since then, but scouring the river channels has not always produced the desired results, since the river's reactions are difficult to predict; buoying had been improved up to 1925; more than a thousand towers, buoys and landmarks had been built. Hundred-ton launches, drawing one and one half meters, can reach as far as Khône, at high water, about three months a year; in other months, the section between Kratié and Khône, much of which had to be traversed by canoe up to 1900, can now be covered, with only one trans-shipment, by a short thirty-ton launch which can manage the sharp turns of the narrow channels. Above Khône, the most difficult passage is through the sandstone canyon of Kemmarat, where the river attains [115] a depth of eighteen meters during the heavy floods and the current in some rapids is from nine to ten knots. Since 1910 more powerful launches have been put into service, and were later supplied with semi-Diesel engines; they have gradually reduced the number of changes but the Keng Sa rapids are still impassable at low water

and necessitate trans-shipments to motor-canoes.

In 1895 a small gunboat, the Lagrandière, went up above the Savannakhet-Vientiane reaches to within 50 kilometers of the Yunnan frontier, about 2,500 kilometers from the sea and 400 meters above sea-level; this was a purely sporting exploit. Since then other steamboats have gone up as far as Luang Prabang, but it was realized that regular traffic could not be maintained through one section, dotted with dangerous rapids. Nevertheless, the trip between the two Laotian capitals previously made by native canoes plying upstream, and by rafts going downstream, has been very much speeded up since 1930 by the use of motor canoes.

In brief, progress is summed up in the following figures; in 1900, at low water, it took 65 days or more to go from Saigon to Luang Prabang; in 1909 the time was reduced to a maximum of 50 days; in 1937 the upstream trip took 37 days, downstream 27; and at high water, it took 27 or 22 days, respectively.

In spite of all this, French Upper Laos is still farther from Saigon by water than Saigon is from Marseille. Even below Vientiane in Lower Laos, the transport capacity of the Mekong depends on the obstacles encountered between Savannakhet and Khône. It is difficult to cut down the present length of the time needed for the journey: the narrowness of the channels and the limited power of the engines which can negotiate them do not

permit increasing the useful cargo beyond 100 tons. At low water, trans-shipment is a heavy burden on shipping. In 1936 only 4,644 tons of freight passed the port of Khone going downstream (10) and 5,286 tons upstream.

10. Excluding teak logs which are floated down the river.

Thus the high hopes for the Mekong as a means of transportation have been dashed. Experts believe that if additional improvements could increase the traffic to 25,000 tons a year, [116] this is a maximum which would be hard to surpass. Railways and highways will therefore have to furnish transportation which will be justified in the future by our reasonable expectations for an enlarged Laotian economy, if not by its extent at present. (11)

11. The arguments in favor of the water route are set forth by Colonel Bernard in the Bulletin du Comité de l'Indochine, February 20, 1936. Navigation on the Mekong has undergone great changes since the end of 1937, at the expiration of the contract of the Campagnie Saigonnaise de Navigation et de Transports, which had replaced the Messageries Fluviales. Steam launches no longer negotiate the Kemmarat narrows;

there is no longer a regular service between Paksé and Savannakhet. From Savannakhet to Vientiane service is now assured by a company employing flat-bottomed barges and from Vientiane to Luang Prabang and Xieng Sen by motor canoes."

10: d'Orleans--300-301 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 436, 455, 525, 651, 177.52 Siam
036.52

"In addition to the forced labour, there is, the capitation tax, the opium tax, and the monopoly of the tchoum-tchoum, but the monopoly of gaming, which is the source of large revenue in Siam itself, has been suppressed here by the Siamese as being immoral. It is the same with the speculation upon the money exchange, which is not yet resorted to in Luang Prabang. In the valley of Ménam, more especially, the money in use is composed of earthenware counters, the circulation of which is suspended or the value altered by a Government decree, large profits being thus secured in very arbitrary fashion. Another source of profit [301] for the treasury of Luang Prabang is the produce of the customs, there being a tax of three per cent. upon the merchandise and of a basket of salt upon each canoe, which comes up from the south with a load of it."

7: Thompson--371-372 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 565, 567, 177.56 France
636.56

"The people were simply divided into slaves and freemen. Of the former there were three kinds: slaves for debt, by sale, or by capture. Slave-trading used to be enormously profitable, for the offspring of slaves were born into perpetual slavery. In 1880 the King of Siam made a generous reform. The descendants of slaves were henceforth to be freemen, and it was made much easier for debt slaves to buy their freedom. No mention was made, however, of captured slaves, but severe penalties were meted out to men convicted of slave-trading. One of the first steps taken by the French was the abolition of the slave trade, despite its affecting important Laotian, Cambodian, Siamese, and even Burmese commercial interests. Next, debt slavery was attacked in 1896, and for this Tournier found an ingenious solution. Special attention [372] was paid to the Khas, who lived in a state of serfdom, and this provoked a series of revolts. Their enfranchisement was begun in 1898, and nowadays a form of patron-client relationship has been evolved, but the bond is easy. It is almost impossible to wipe the slate clean, for many of the slaves resist change, since it is an easier way of getting rid of a debt than by working as freemen."

26: Brodrick--60 S-3 (1939) 1944 Laotians
116, 631, 177.63 France
636.63

"Most of the Laos region is under direct French administration, but the kingdom of Luang-Prabang (consisting of the provinces of Luang-Prabang, of Houaphan and of the Fifth Military Territory) is a 'protectorate.' Until 1893 the Siamese were in effective possession of about one-half of the Luang-Prabang realm, but by 1904 the French had obtained the cession of the whole of the kingdom."

68: Mouhot--85-86 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians
116, 131, 728, 631, 162, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"A great number of the inhabitants of this province [HD: i.e. Saraburi, in Siam] are natives of Laos, and are principally captives brought from Vien Chang after the insurrection there. The provinces of Boatioume and Petchaboune are peopled by Siamese, for Laos proper only commences at M'Lôm. Boatioume, Petchaboune, Sôm, and some other provinces in the north and east, are governed by Siamese mandarins of rank more or less elevated; that is to say, several of them have the power of life and death, and are [86]then considered as viceroys. The most distant provinces belong to the empire of Siam, and form a part of it."

"On the 28th February, 1861, I arrived at the town of Chaiapume, [HD: at that time a Laotian town tributary to Siam] and presented myself before the governor to request his permission to hire some elephants or oxen to enable me to continue my journey. I showed him my French passport, and also gave him the letter from Khrom Luang, [HD: one of the brothers of the King of Siam] and another from the Governor of Korat; [HD: an important outlying province of Siam. See category 116, p. 115] but all in vain. He replied that, if I wanted oxen or elephants, there were plenty in the forest. I might easily have done without the assistance of this functionary, and procured animals from people in the village; but they would have made me pay two or three times the ordinary price, and my purse was too slenderly filled to allow of my submitting to this extortion, which would probably be repeated at every station.

The only thing left me to do, therefore, was to retrace my steps, and, leaving one of my servants at Korat with [106] my baggage, to return to Bangkok and claim aid from the consul, the ministers, or the king himself; for there is a treaty between the Governments of Siam and France, concluded by M. de Montigny, which obliges the king to afford assistance and protection to the French, and especially to missionaries and naturalists. It was a sad loss of time for me, and might occasion me serious inconvenience; for, if I were delayed, the rainy season might surprise me in the midst of the

116, 631, 122, 177.63
636.63

forests before I could reach a healthier region, and the consequences might be fatal. However, I was forced to submit, and I returned to Bangkok."

68: Mouhot--113 N-5
116, 579, 162, 631, 177.63
636.63

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians
Siam

"These precautions are very necessary, for Korat is a nest of robbers and assassins, the resort of all the scum of the Laotian and Siamese races. Bandits and vagrants, escaped from slavery or from prison, gather here like the vultures and wolves which follow armies and caravans. It is not that they enjoy complete immunity, for the [HD: Siamese] governor, son of Bodine, the general who conquered Battambong and the revolted provinces, is viceroy of the state, has absolute power of life and death, and is, they say, very severe, cutting off a head or a hand with little compunction. But still it is Siamese justice, 'non inviola:' there are neither gendarmes nor police; the person robbed must himself arrest the offender and bring him before the judge. Even his neighbour will give no assistance in the capture."

68: Mouhot--115 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 - Laotians
116, 439, 631, 651, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"The merchants who bring silk, [HD: to Korat, Siam] which, though of inferior quality, is an important article of commerce, come from Laos, Oubone, Bassac, and Jasoutone.

The entire province of Korat comprises a number of villages, and more than eleven towns, some containing as many as fifty or sixty thousand inhabitants. This little state is simply tributary, [HD: to Siam] but on condition of furnishing the first and most considerable levy of men in case of war.

The tribute consists of gold or silver, and in several districts, amongst others those of Chaiapume and Poukiéan, amounts to eight ticals a head. Some pay in silk, which is weighed by the mandarins, who, as with the cardamom at Pursat, and the langoutis at Battambong, buy a further quantity on their own account, and at their own price.

Elephants are numerous, and a great many are brought from the north of Laos as far as Muang-Lang. I should think there must be more than a thousand of these animals in each province. Oxen and buffaloes were formerly exceedingly cheap, but the distemper, which has for some years committed great ravages among the herds, has doubled or tripled the price. They are brought southward from the extreme north of East Laos, and even from the frontiers of Tonquin."

68: Mouhot--120-121 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians· Siam

116. 609. 122. 631. 177.63
636.63

"I was again delayed a few days at Korat before I could obtain elephants, in consequence of the absence of the viceroy; but on his return he received me in a friendly manner, and gave me a letter of introduction to the governors of the provinces under his jurisdiction. He likewise furnished me with two elephants for myself and servants, and two others for my baggage; so at last I was able to set out for Chaiapume. Before I started, the Chinese with whom I lodged gave me the following advice: --'Buy a tam-tam, and, wherever you halt, sound it. They will say, "Here is an officer of the king;" robbers will keep aloof, and the authorities will respect you. If this does not answer, the only plan to get rid of all the difficulties which the Laotian officials will be sure to throw in your way is to have a good stick, the longer the better. Try it on the back of any mandarin who makes the least resistance and will not do what you wish. Put all delicacy aside. Laos is not like a country of the whites. Follow my advice, and you will find it good.'

I was, however, much better received on my second visit to Chaiapume, and required neither tam-tam nor cane. The sight of the elephants and the order from the viceroy of Korat made the mandarin as supple as a glove, and he provided me with other elephants for a visit to some ruins existing about 3 leagues north of the town, at the foot of a mountain. The superstitious Laotians say that [121] these ruins contain gold, but that every one who has sought for it has been struck with madness."

68: Mouhot--129-130 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians
116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"[HD: Going north to Pak Lai] I soon found that, but for the letter from the governor of Korat, I should have met everywhere with the same reception as at Chaiapume; however, this missive was very positively worded. Wherever I went, the authorities were ordered to furnish me with elephants, and supply me with all necessary provisions, as if I were a king's envoy. I was much amused to see these petty provincial chiefs executing the orders of my servants, and evidently in dread lest, following the Siamese custom, I should use the stick.

One of my men, to give himself importance, had tied one of these bugbears to the arms which he carried, and the sight of it alone sufficed, with the sound of the tam-tam, to inspire fear, whilst small presents judiciously distributed, and a little money to the cornacs, [HD: elephant drivers] procured me the sympathy of the people.

Most of the villages are situated about a day's journey from one another, but frequently you have to travel for three or four days without seeing a single habitation, [130] and then you have no alternative but to sleep in the jungle."

68: Mouhot--251 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians
116, 122, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"I have done everything in my power to obtain letters and passports [HD: to Laos] from the French and Siamese authorities here, [HD: i.e. in Bangkok, Siam] but all have been nearly useless. I have obtained nothing but a letter from the King's brother, [HD: Khrom Luang] who has the superintendence of the provinces north of Laos, and with that I trust to be able to get on."

68: Mouhot--256-257 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians
116, 122, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"When I reached Chaiapume, I went to the governor with my letters, and asked him to lend me elephants to enable me to continue my journey, that being the only method of travelling among these mountains; but he refused me decidedly, and consequently I have been forced to retrace my steps. Here one can do nothing without the help of the people in power.

I therefore returned to Korat, and established Phrai in a [257] hut which I hired of a Chinese; and went myself to Bangkok, to procure from the authorities orders to the different governors of provinces to aid me instead of throwing obstacles in my way."

68: Mouhot--258-260 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians-1-4
116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"[HD: Excerpt from one of Mouhot's letters to his wife] You will be much surprised on receiving this letter to see it dated from Saraburi, [HD: in Siam] for if you have received the one I wrote in January, you must believe me to be already in Laos. But man proposes, and God disposes. However, to reassure you, I must begin by saying that I am in perfect health, and full of strength and hope. All goes well with me.

I had in fact reached Laos. I arrived at Korat after a tedious and troublesome journey, for I had only a few oxen for my baggage, and was forced to walk myself. From there I went to Chaiapume, and here an animal of the mandarin species made himself great, and under the pretext of having no elephants refused me the means of going further, and was so rude and impolite to me that I determined at once to return and protest against the very insufficient protection which had been granted to me. Indeed, I could do nothing else, not being able to go on. The elephant which had brought me to Chaiapume took me back to Korat, and there I found a mandarin from Bangkok, who had been sent to fetch a white elephant which had been taken in Laos. I begged him to let me join his party, and he lent me two elephants, one for my servant and luggage, and one for myself. I left Phrai at Korat, with the greater part of my possessions, having hired a room for him in the house of a Chinese, and a week afterwards found myself back at Saraburi, in company with this strange divinity (who, by the way, had

more black than white about him), and of the grand personage who had been sent to escort him, and who had showered on him every kind of attention during the journey. He had an escort of fifty foot soldiers and several on horseback. As for me, I wanted for nothing; at every halt the mandarin sent me ducks, fish, fruit, sweetmeats, &c., and he was [259] also kind enough to allow me eight men as night-guards to watch round my fire. In return, I discovered for him in the mountains large quantities of copper, and even gold, which delighted him.

The whole province of Saraburi was in motion to do honour to the white elephant; the King and all his court are coming here; the ministers are here already to watch over him. I decided, therefore, to apply to the Siamese, hoping to obtain more from them than from the Europeans; and yesterday hearing of the arrival of Khrom Luang, the King's brother, I hastened to address myself to him. He, however, had only passed through, and was gone to Prabat, to join the King. However, I found here the man I wanted, the mandarin who has most interest in Laos, and without a letter from whom it would have been difficult to proceed. I did not know him, but I went to him to ask about the Prince, and told him what I wanted. 'I am your man,' said he; 'the Prince can only give an order for me to write a letter, such as I will give you, if you like.' I accepted gladly, and promised him in return my double-barrelled gun, which I could easily replace, 'if

he would only furnish me with the means of travelling through Laos without expense, and would bring the Chaiapume mandarin to reason.' The poor governor of Saraburi was with us, and had to remain more than an hour amidst a number of others kneeling on the bare ground, while I was seated on the mat of the mandarin, by his side, eating sweetmeats and drinking tea, while he dictated a letter in which he called the governor of Chaiapume a fool, and threatened to deprive him of his office, and of this letter I was to be the bearer; and he promised me another general one on the morrow, in which he stated that if I did not receive efficient aid it might bring on a war; [HD: i.e. with France who was then occupying Cochinchina] and this he also repeated to all the chiefs present. My cause was gained, and I could plainly see that our affairs must be going on well in Cochin China; the echo of the cannon had its effect in Siam. However, I had pro-
[260] mised him my gun, and evidently he wished to have it before he gave me the letters. This morning, therefore, I took it to him all cleaned and furbished up. He was delighted with it, and gave me at once the letter for Korat and Chaiapume, and to-morrow I am to have one which will carry me all through Laos without any expense but a few ticals to the cornacs. [HD: i.e. elephant drivers] Without this, judging by what I had to pay for an elephant from Korat to Chaiapume, my purse would have been exhausted by the time I reached the north of Laos, and I should not have had the means of returning without

sending to Bangkok to ask for help, which would have been a work of difficulty, and, what is worse, I should have been exposed all along the route to the insolence of these arrogant mandarins. Now, they will all humble themselves before me, taking me for some important personage sent by the Emperor Napoleon or Queen Victoria to collect butterflies, insects, and birds for them. I shall no longer travel on foot, but on elephants, and shall want for nothing. Agree, then, with me, that out of evil comes good, or rather, that God does all for the best. When at Chaiapume I found myself obliged to retrace my steps, after so many fatigues, and so great a waste of money, I was only downcast for a few minutes; God almost immediately inspired me with the idea that all would turn to my advantage, and this persuasion never left me again. Unaccountably to myself, I was gayer on my return than I had been in coming, although then I was everywhere well received and kindly treated by the people. Even after my discourteous reception [HD: by the mandarin] at Chaiapume, all the inhabitants came to see me, to bring me little presents, and to express their regret that they could not aid me from fear of their chief. The head of the monastery took me to see some ruins similar to those in Cambodia, and gave me a tiger-skin; and all along the road I experienced the same kindness, and numbers came to me to ask for advice and various remedies."

68: Mouhot--276-277 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians-1-2
116, 122, 174, 609, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

"Notwithstanding the small population of Korat, it is the chief town of a province, or rather an extensive state, containing eleven towns or boroughs, chief towns of districts, and a great number of villages, more or less populated. Fifteen days' [277] journey brings you from Korat to Bassac on the banks of the Mekon, and in the same latitude.

My intention was to proceed northwards, only stopping in the province of Louang Prabang, and then to descend the river as far as Cambodia. I hired elephants, and five days after, having passed through several villages inhabited by the descendants of ancient Siamese colonists who had taken refuge there in time of war, passing continually through forests of resin trees thinly scattered, I arrived at Ban Prang, a village where I discovered a ruined tower, and also the remains of an ancient temple. The next place I arrived at was Chaiapoune, the principal Laotian town in the north, and the chief town of the district. Here also I found ruins; but they were inconsiderable, and seemed more like a Laotian imitation than the work of Khmer Dôme. The inscriptions on the other temples in the province of Korat resemble those of Ongcor: here I found upon a block of broken slate-stone an inscription in Laotian characters, but which is unintelligible even to the inhabitants of the country. These, with some remains of idols and towers at the foot of a mountain in the district, were the only vestiges of that ancient

68: Mouhot--276-277 N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians-2
116, 122, 174, 609, 631, 177.63 Siam
636.63

civilization which I discovered in the north. Everything leads me to suppose that here also were the limits which separated the kingdom of Cambodia from that of Vieng Thiane, destroyed during the last war which the Siamese raised against the Western Laotians or white-bellies. It was in this district that I was stopped in my travels by the authorities of the country, who treated me with great rudeness, and who forbade the people to let me have any means of transport, even after seeing my passport. I was therefore obliged to retrace my steps, deploring the expense and loss of time in the best part of the year, and which will cause me serious inconvenience."

3: Robequain--5 S-5 (no date) 1944 Laqtians
116, 175, 177.64 France
636.64

"Laos was the last great country to become part of French Indo-China. French influence there had spread gradually, coming first from Cambodia and then from Tonkin and Annam. This peaceful expansion is forever connected with the name of Pavie, the explorer who set out 'to conquer hearts.' Nevertheless, there were clashes with Siam which was eager to acquire all the countries where Thai dialects were spoken. The French protectorate over Laos was not established until the Franco-Siamese treaty of October 3, 1893, under which Siam renounced all claims to territory on the left bank of the Mekong."

7: Thompson--78-79 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 647, 177.64 France
636.64

"Laos offered a virgin field for Doumer's administrative experiments. In 1895, two years after its nominal occupation, Laos had been divided into two districts which corresponded to no geographic or economic reality. Moreover, the country was totally undeveloped, and Cochin-China, as usual, was called upon to subsidize the administrative expenses. In the final analysis, this country had administrators but no administration. It was rather vaguely hoped that the projected railroad system would eventually overcome Laos's [79] geographical barriers and arouse the country from its economic lethargy."

7: Thompson--368-369 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 647, 651, 177.64 France
~~636.64~~

"Though the year 1893 marked the nominal occupation of Laos, it was not until three years later that the country was organized administratively as Upper and Lower Laos. This division remained purely theoretical and it was modified in 1899, when both sections were united under a single Resident Superior and a single budget. The local organization was left as it was found, only the upper stratum of offices was changed. In this the French were inspired by their Siamese predecessors, who had respected native institutions, and also by budgetary considerations. Thirteen French Commissars, aided by native officials and the inevitable interpreters, exercised all powers with a tranquil disregard of Montesquieu's principles. A native guard was adequate to perform police service among such a placid people. Revenues came from the usual head tax paid by the male population in money and in kind, and the commutation of corvée duty, licences for foreign merchants, and an export tax. There was no land tax and only a local levy on the products of the soil. The indirect tax on opium was harder to collect because certain [369] tribes had always raised enough for their own needs. There was little increase in revenues despite the steady increase in population. The budget was poor and not properly drawn up, so it had to be regularly subsidized. Cochin-China, as usual, bore the brunt of this deficit."

7: Thompson--369 [2] J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 647, 652, 671, 177.64 France
636, 64

"Of the budget expenditures one per cent was allotted to road building, when paths were almost non-existent in Laos. Fifty per cent of the revenues was absorbed by the administration. A subsidy to the company that navigated the Mekong cost 350,000 francs: the total revenues were 600,000, and all for the occasional transportation of the hundred European residents and their mail. The Laotians were much too amiable and indolent to protest against this state of affairs. They were a charming people, who knew nothing of French civilization but the pleasure of paying taxes. They asked little and so they got little. If this were true of the Laotians it was even more so of the mountain peoples. The country was administered as if it were exclusively inhabited by Laotians. The codes, and the mandarins who applied them, were Laotian. The Provincial Council, long the sole representative organization, had no delegate from the mountaineers. Buddhists were given a monopoly of the education, though the Yaos were Confucianist and the Khas fetishists. The administration concentrated on the valley-bound Laotians and ignored the scattered mountain peoples, who differed radically in religion, language, and customs. The Meos's reaction to the Laotians was shown by the massacre of 1920."

7: Thompson--369-370 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians-
116, 647, 645, 653, 177.64 France
636.64

"The centralized administration of Laos was not only part of the French mania for simplification and uniformity, which for various [370] reasons had reached Laos later than elsewhere, but was primarily stimulated by the economic importance of Laos's mines and town building in the post-war period. The modernization of Vientiane was especially notable, for it had been buried under the jungle, 400 kilometres from the sea, and on an almost unnavigable river. When the potential wealth of the country became evident, the administration began to veer away from the Protectorate ideal to direct government, making tabula rasa of native institutions. Some Hanoi officials took it into their head to suppress the King of Luang-Prabang as an obstacle to transforming Laos into a bona-fide colony. Varenne had the good sense to recognize how much the Laotians venerated their king, and so he rescued his throne from the assimilationist peril. The Protectorate was saved, and to push Laos farther along the trail blazed by Annam and Cambodia, a native advisory assembly was given to the country in 1929, and a mixed Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce, both of which recently sent delegates to the Grand Conseil. The process can only fully develop when the rail and road network is completed--that administrative pipe-dream linking Laos to the rest of the Union--which in 1936 looked perilously near fulfilment. An unfortunate corollary is that the forty-year tariff freedom of Laos, a miracle in French colonization, died in 1932 with the growth of the Siamese and Indo-Chinese railroad construction."

10: d'Orleans--298-299 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 208, 647, 651 177.64 France
636.64

"To revert to Luang Prabang, we have a Vice-Consul there, or rather an agent, for he has not got an exequatur. Assisted by twelve interpreters, he does wonders with the limited means at his disposal, but as he is generally short of money and is obliged to borrow from the Chinese to pay the staff, he cannot do much to uphold French interests. The most he can do is to keep up the few friends whom he has gained for us by his personal influence and winning ways. For his title of French agent weighs as nothing in the balance compared to his personal popularity, so that he is seconded but not feared, for it is known that he cannot speak out, that his threats will remain a dead letter, that he is not backed up, and that the Foreign Office seems indifferent to the Mekong question. Compare our mode of action to that of the English in Xieng Mai, a Laos State bordering on Burmah and similarly situated to Luang Prabang. At Xieng Mai there is a consul with an exequatur, that is to say duly recognized by the native Government and his own, well [299] paid and backed up by his superiors, having under his own orders several thousand British protégés and holding very much the same position as the Siamese Commissioner here, this latter being everything while we are nothing."

23: Franck--281-282 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 144, 644, 177.64 France
636.64

"The huge commissaire, now half invalid but still a great force in his province, and beloved apparently by all classes of its residents, was a survival of the earlier colonial days, when a man in his present position was virtually king [282] of all he surveyed. His half-dozen pure-blooded dogs all wore stout canvas pants to assure their offspring against mixture with the local mongrel breed. But some officials had not taken the same precautions with themselves, and had several brown-complexioned children at school in Hanoi, though they were bachelors."

23: Franck--303
116, 175, 648, 177.64
636.64

T-2 (1924) 1926

Laotians
France

"The same altruism and love of their fellow-man that has given the French the arduous task of protecting the rest of Indo-China led to their present position in the affairs of Laos. About the time the Chinese from Yünnan were pillaging Luang Prabang kingdom a Frenchman named Pavie was sent there on a mission. The father of the present king, born Tiao Kham Souk, who lived from 1837 until 1904 and reigned under the name of Ritthithamaronjsac--though he was more popularly known as King Zacharine, and probably not entirely on account of his sweet disposition--was an absolute despot, descended from a long direct line of similar rulers. For the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha has been a kingdom as far back as the memory of its people goes. Zacharine became a great friend of Pavie, at least according to such data as was available in the French government offices of Luang Prabang, and when the Siamese failed to protect him, as they had promised, against the Chinese, he went to Siam under Pavie's wing; and later, in a quarrel with the Siamese, who had burned and looted and carried off most of the people of Vientiane and Xieng Khuang, he made the mistake, like his royal neighbors of Annam and Cambodia, of calling in the French. By 1893 Siam had been compelled to give up all claim to this ancient kingdom and to the magnificent highlands of Tran-ninh, and all Laos became a European dependency under the protection of France."

73: Hammer--240 S-4 (no date) 1951 Laotians
116, 642, 648, 727, 177.64 France
636.64

"In Laos, as in Vietnam, the Chinese occupation had provided a protective screen behind which a nationalist regime had consolidated itself in power. A Free Laotian movement forced the abdication of King Sisavong Vong, set up its own more representative government, and then brought him back to the throne as the constitutional leader of an independent country. Only after the Chinese withdrew could the French return to Laos, and the Chinese troops were in no haste to leave. China did not withdraw the last of its troops from Indochina until midsummer of 1946. The French promised Laos, as they had Cambodia, to restore the areas taken by Thailand in 1941; (8) and in both countries they

8. On November 17, 1946 the French signed an agreement to this effect with Thailand in regard to both Laotian and Cambodian territory.

played upon the fear of Vietnamese and Thai aggression. On August 27, 1946 they signed an agreement with Laos (recognizing the union of the country under Sisavong Vong, formerly king only of Luang Prabang) much like that with Cambodia, by which they restored the prewar protectorate in modifiedbut not radically changed form."

6: Goudal--5 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-1-4
116, 101, 161, 141, 463, 177.65 France
636.65

"The Tai are of Mongolian race. They came from China and formed various groups, including the Laotians (and the Siamese) and the predominant ethnical group in Upper Tonking. Their numbers are assessed at a million. They are of less than average height (1.59 metres). As a people they are very gay and hospitable. Like the Cambodians, the Laotians are Buddhists, but their religious sense goes hand in hand with very great moral freedom. They are indifferent farmers but engage frequently in fishing and hunting and are excellent boatmen. As traders they possess remarkable qualities.

For a long time the Laotian was considered as an apathetic creature, hating all effort and anxious only to enjoy the present without worrying about the morrow or without trying to improve his moral well-being or his material existence by persevering labour. It cannot be denied that this people, whose country was repeatedly laid waste throughout the centuries by invasions from the north and the west, seemed at the time of our arrival in Indo-China to be doomed to decadence. . . At the present time the country has roads and tracks, and its doors are open to commercial and industrial undertakings which have already done much for the development of the land and its mineral wealth. The local authorities have no difficulty in securing the very active co-operation of the inhabitants in the contruction of roads and tracks. . . The legend

of the Laotian as an idle creature, exercising passive resistance to any attempt to make use of his intelligence or his physical labour, had disappeared. Far from taking no interest in public welfare as was long asserted, the Laotians on the contrary seem to take a lively interest in it, and in particular in the progress of the development of the country and of the schools and medical institutions that are being established. (2)

2. Léon Archimbaud: Rapport au nom de la Commission des finances sur le budget général des Colonies (1928), pp. 88-89. This point of view is confirmed by the following statement:

'It has been repeatedly alleged that the Laotian abhors work and does only what is strictly necessary to provide for his own needs and for those of his family. He is said to have two serious defects: a very idle mind and a hatred of effort. This view is mistaken. It is certainly true that there is a certain fundamental apathy and indolence about the Laotian but this can be quite naturally explained by his background and the circumstances

in which his material existence has so far been passed.

'Times have now changed, the country is entirely pacified and war and piracy are merely a memory. . . . Exports of raw materials which were practically non-existent a mere 15 years ago are now increasing rapidly and this is clearly proof that the Laotian worker is not, as has been said, indifferent to gain, but that he can collaborate effectively with the settlers.

'The whole question is one of making use of his services in a manner suited to his special mentality, customs, qualities and defects. It is essential to treat him fairly and kindly; his intelligence and his docility of character enable him to adapt himself gradually to modern working methods. The tin mines in the province of Cammon have for several years been employing Laotian workers who have proved completely satisfactory both for mining the ore and for its treatment.

'Similarly, in connection with road making, in Upper and Lower Laos groups of workers have been used for cutting down

trees and clearing away stumps and undergrowth in the heart of a mountainous country where conditions of work are difficult and resources are slight. Under the skilful direction of our administrators and engineers the use of Laotian labour has proved satisfactory in almost every case." (M. Bosc: Rapport d'ensemble sur le Laos. Conference on Native Communities held at the International Colonial Exhibition, Paris, 1931.)"

10: d'Orleans--268 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 166, 651, 177.65 Siam
636.65

"Fishing is one of the principal resources of the inhabitants of the valley of Nam Ou; they are forced to turn everything into money, for they are crushed by the taxes imposed upon them by Siam. The village, on the right bank, in which we spend the night, is inhabited by some people from Traniuh, who tell us that they left their homes three years ago on account of the cholera, they came to Luang Prabang in five nights, and from there they have come up here; but they do not appear to have gained any advantage from their change of place; they have fled from the frying-pan into the fire, for their new conquerors make each man pay eight rupees a year poll tax; they can remember a time before these heavy burdens were laid upon them, but now they can never satisfy the revenue collectors. A great many of them are forced to sell all their possessions."

10: d'Orleans--296-297 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 208, 647, 651 177.65 Siam
636.65

"We find that a people is being formed; if there is not a sentiment of nationality the governing power is becoming autocratic and an administrative centralization is being effected to its profit, under the control and the direction of the Siamese. The local rulers are in communication with Bangkok, even if they have not been on a visit there; they are learning to appreciate luxury, and they are upon the point of arming their troops with European weapons, of increasing their effective, and lending aid to the forces of the invaders. In order to obtain these charming results of what may be called 'the new civilisation,' much money is needed, but if the king's expenditure has increased it has not been so with the earnings of the people. The latter were not consulted when a tax was put upon opium 'for their good,' when the tchoum-tchoum was made a monopoly, or when a capitation tax of eight rupees for each man and six for each woman was imposed. The consequence is that they are discontented and unable to make any further payments, mandarins from all parts of the kingdom writing that the villagers are willing enough to come to the capital and take the oath, but empty-handed. Last year several had to sell what they possessed, and now they are endeavouring to borrow, and are murmuring [297] against those who have ruined them. The peasants bow the head in subjection because they see no liberator; but the first man who comes forward with some arms and a relatively small sum of money, in order to drive out the Siamese, may be assured of encountering an enthusiastic and almost unanimous welcome from the population."

7: Thompson--370 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 671, 177.67 France
636.67

"Justice has followed in the wake of the Laotian administration. At first it was left almost untouched, with Laotian codes and magistrates, even for the mountain peoples. In 1900 the Resident Superior, Tournier, made a first tentative translation of some Laotian laws, but he found them so incomplete and so poorly organized that the work was temporarily abandoned. In 1908 Sallé, a Saigon magistrate, took up the task. Beginning with the kingdom of Luang-Prabang he promulgated three codes of civil and criminal law and procedure. Then new texts were discovered, which necessitated more study from 1917 to 1922, when another code was promulgated. It was this time very complete, in fact too complete for the type of judge who applied it. Simplification was needed for their understanding as well as for the illiterate masses. A modified version was put out in 1928, but the following year it was again changed. As in Cambodia and Annam, the problem of discovering, understanding, translating, re-organizing, and harmonizing native law with some basic principles of Western legislation is so delicate that it requires an enormous amount of time and experimentation."

7: Thompson--371 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 563, 661, 671, 177.67 France
636.67

"Nowadays the code of Vientiane or of Luang-Prabang is applied to the Thai peoples and to certain Kha tribes; Burmese custom law to the Lus in Muong Sing; and their particular customs to the other ethnical groups--all under magistrates of their own people. The judgments of these courts are examined by the French authorities. This is not a useless precaution, as often the judges themselves are in a quandary about interpreting their laws and traditions. Moreover, the venality of these judges passes all understanding. If the native appears without offerings appropriate to his station and that of the judge, he is lost. Undoubtedly with time the specialization of magistrates, with guarantees in salary and promotion, will obviate the most flagrant of these evils."

7: Thompson--370-371 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 692, 177.69 France
636.69

"The Resident Superior is at the head of native justice, which is administered by native magistrates under the control of French ad-[371]ministrators. As yet there is no specialization of administrative and judicial powers, since magistrates are taken from the civil service. The general organization of the courts resembles that of the other countries of the Union. Unimportant cases are settled by the heads of the villages and cantons. Important suits are sent to the provincial courts, which are presided over by the administrative head of the province and native judges. A higher court judges appeals from the provincial courts and is placed under the Resident Superior, French, and native judges. Wholly French courts exist for European cases."

10: d'Orleans--265 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 177.70 Siam
636.70

"A Siamese lieutenant, in a yellow silk jacket, white cotton drawers, bare legs, and slippers, invites us to tea at his house. He inquires our names, and promises us some fresh pirogues for the continuation of our voyage. I take advantage of this visit to glance at the armoury of the post. It includes about a dozen rifles of all kinds for percussion caps, Remingtons, Thaï, Laotian, &c."

10: d'Orleans--258 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894

116, 712, 177.71
636.71

Laos
Siam

[LSS: at Sop Nao] "Accompanied by Takiate, I repair to the Siamese post, which is formed of a collection of huts rather larger than the others, surrounded by a palisade; there is no flag, but a great many women and dogs. The garrison consists of twelve men, in European clothes made of strong linen, and armed with Remingtons. The officer in charge invites me to sit down and take tea with him. He tells me that the boats are ready, and promises to give us a letter for the chief of Muong Ngoi."

10: d'Orleans--268 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 609, 727, 177.72 Siam
636.72

"At first they refuse to let us have any provisions, and as we are now without food I am reduced to extreme measures. The villagers assert that they have neither fowls nor eggs in the place.

'If you do not rear poultry,' I reply, 'we may consider that all we find are wild birds,' and I tell the interpreter to open a hen-house and take out two chickens, offering fifteen pence for them, which is, of course, accepted. When the owners have once examined the coins, sounded them and found them good, they regain confidence and bring us some eggs. Their distrust arises from the proceedings of the Siamese soldiers, who, as they travel, requisition everything they require without any payment; the villagers thought that we might do the same, but now they realize that we are honest people."

"Without seeking to undertake an historical work, which would carry us too far, we have only to glance over some of the old maps to find the justification for that phrase of Garnier's which should have been the groundwork of our policy in this region. 'What we had to do was to make the king of Luang Prabang feel that a day might come when we should take up the rights exercised over his principality by the Court of Hué, which has now become once more our vassal. Unfortunately, the Siamese, whose influence had extended, after 1838 (2) towards Luang Prabang, came and [293] established

2. According to Hallett (A Thousand Miles on an Elephant, p. 201), the Shan States of Vienchang and of Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam. The Siamese authority in the Shan States consisted in arranging their external affairs and sanctioning the nomination of their chiefs. In return for the protection of Siam against the foreign invaders, three States consented to send a triennial tribute, consisting of gold and silver boxes, chased cellarettes and salt-cellars, as well as gold and silver trees worth from fifteen to thirty-five pounds each. To these statements of Hallett as to the early date at which Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam, I would rejoin that the chronicles of Luang Prabang, which have been consulted by M. Pavie, do not contain any

10: d'Orleans--292-294
116, 648, 721, 177.72
636.72

allusions to Siam at an earlier period than the last half-century. The Laï chronicle, to which I referred above when dealing with Deo Van Tri, only alluded to the state of dependency in which the King of Luang Prabang stood with regard to Annam.

M. Deschanel would seem to have anticipated the views suggested, if not openly expressed by Hallett, Colquhoun and Lord Lamington, when he wrote in 1885: 'The day that England seizes Burmah, our authority in the eastern part of the Indo-Chinese peninsula will receive a severe shock. If we do not take our precautions (in the Upper Laos) the English, once established at Xieng Maï (in Siamese Laos) will be masters, morally speaking, of the valley of the Mekong and the important position of Luang Prabang, which was tributary to Annam. Thus cut off from the great river, in danger of seeing England secure the protectorate of Siam, our situation in Indo-China will be very much weakened.'--Compare Garnier above,

themselves there for good a few years ago, when they learnt that the French were approaching from the direction of Tonquin. I have already related, when speaking of Deo Van Tri, the ambush set for his brothers, the Siamese officers being accompanied by an Englishman, one McCarthy, who, with another of his compatriots, had been appointed agent at Luang Prabang. I have also referred to the meeting of French and Siamese troops in the plain of Theng, and the retreat of the latter. We were not able to push on any further, for the aged king of Luang Prabang, who [294] had at one time hoped to be backed up by our arms, foresaw the policy of non-intervention and excessive prudence which would be impressed upon our officers. He recognised that the valiant champions of our colonial extension would have their hands tied and that it would be no use reckoning upon us. 'The Siamese are coming up,' he said to Dr. Neis; 'we are lost.'

As a matter of fact, while we were standing still, the Siamese were advancing, and it is easy to understand the political course followed by the Court of Bangkok; as long as it is left free, it is always marching forward, occupying advance posts, sometimes with only seven or eight militia men, but still making a reality of its occupation. But for Colonel Pennequin, Theng would have fared no better than all the important centres upon the Mekong as far as Cambodia and than several towns between the coast and the river; one can feel that these Siamese troops, when they are on the march, have behind them

the moral if not the effective support of intelligent and fearless persons, who are used to getting their way by firm speaking, the only obstacles which they are likely to encounter from European nations being idle diplomatic protests."

25: Brodrick--93-94 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians-1-2
116, 177.72 France
636.72

"The immediate cause of the extension of French influence over the Upper Laos was the invasion of Luang-Prabang by Siamese troops in 1855, at a time when the French were, with great difficulty, forcing their protectorate upon the realm of the Annamese ruler. It was not until 1893 that the French demanded the withdrawal of the Siamese troops. A French flotilla threatened Bangkok. The Siamese then abandoned all claims to Laotian lands on the left bank of the Mekong, and in 1907 evacuated the Luang-Prabang territories on the right bank. A series of quarrels, bickerings and pin-pricks [94] between British and French concerning the Burmese frontier was finally settled by the Anglo-French Convention of 1896.

The French owe their Laotian protectorate more to Auguste Pavie, a Breton, who landed as a marine N.C.O. at Saigon in 1869, than to any other one man. Pavie, a bright lad, qualified as a telegraph officer and travelled far and wide in Cambodia learning the language and getting to know the people. Le Myre de Vilars, the first civilian to govern Cochin-China for the French, sent Pavie up the Mekong on a mission of exploration, and in 1885 secured his nomination as consul at Luang-Prabang. Pavie gained the confidence of the Laotians, took sides in natives' disputes and induced the Luang-Prabang ruler to ask for French 'protection.' Later, as French representative at Bangkok, Pavie led the negotiations preceding the Franco-Siamese Convention. The

25; Brodrick--93-94 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians-2
116, 177.72 France
636.72

ex-N.C.O. had made good and, of course, was quite forgotten by his fellow-countrymen when he died in 1895.

He had given his country a vast territory over one-third the size of France."

23: Franck--301 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 657, 779, 177.77 France
636.77

"But the French do not insist on imposing their religious beliefs on their wards and colonies. In Luang Prabang they go so far as to provide for the up-keep of the temples and monasteries in the annual governmental budget. In a way this is a means of supporting the educational system, for the priests act as schoolmasters to their novices. In great contrast to China, there is not a single Christian missionary in all the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha, not even a Catholic priest."

26: Brodrick--56 [2] S-3 (1939) 1944 Cambodians -1-2
116, 779, 871, 177.77 France
636.77

"The national faith of Cambodia is Little Vehicle Buddhism shared with Ceylon, Siam and Burma. The Church is, perhaps, stronger and more flourishing in the western lands than in Cambodia and the Laos but the French have done much to raise the educational--and, indeed, the moral--standard of the monks. (1) A school of Pali has

> 1. The French in Cambodia, as everywhere they rule, educate their subjects. Not only is instruction, both primary and secondary, given in French and Cambodian (we had no system of education in Burmese) but there is a School of Arts and a special School for Magistrates. Indeed, the whole judicial system has been overhauled of recent years. Registration of births, marriages and deaths, land-registration, new penal and civil codes have been introduced and in 1922 the judiciary was reformed on the French model.

been established so that Cambodians shall not have to seek learning in Siam. In every way the French have fostered the Faith and with fairly satisfactory results. While I was in Cambodia in 1939 the Venerable Narada, a Buddhist abbot from Ceylon, visited Cambodia and the Laos, bringing with him slips from the sacred bodhi tree at Anuradhapura.

26: Brodrick--56 [2] S-3 (1939) 1944 Cambodians-2
116, 779, 871, 177.77 France
636.77

He was received with honours by the sovereigns of Cambodia and the realm of Luang-Prabang."

25: Brodrick--104 [2] S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
116, 779, 177.79 France
636.79

"In the kingdom of Luang-Prabang there is no doubt that Little Vehicle is the state religion. We have seen how royally and respectfully. H. M. King Sisavang Vong received the Venerable Narada and his slip of the sacred Bodhi Tree. [HD: see category 116, p. 62-63] And the efforts of the French administration to purge the practice and reform the discipline of the monks was mildly successful in the Laos though not so obvious as in Cambodia. Still, the Laotians are difficult to coerce."

7: Thompson--376-377 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 814, 177.81 France
636.81

"The tempo of France's political and economic penetration of Laos has been so much slower than elsewhere in the peninsula that the intellectual counterpart inevitably lagged ever farther behind. Naturally, the [377] first work accomplished was of a practical nature. Massie, of the Pavie Mission, wrote a dictionary in 1890-91, that included some 1,300 words, designed to aid French officials and merchants adrift in Thai countries. He found the language very simple, unlike the complexities of Annamite, and estimated only a year's study necessary for a relative mastery of it."

7: Thompson--377 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 484, 815, 177.81 France
636.81

"Laos has offered a rich field to scientists. Henri Mouhot was its first scientific explorer, and he was followed by others, chiefly zoologists. The Lagrée Mission continued this work, as did Dr. Harmand, who made a great collection there on his 1872-78 series of explorations. Pierre's work on the forest flora of Laos has been perhaps the greatest single scientific achievement."

7: Thompson--377 [2] J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 871, 177.87 France
636.87

"Much too small a sum has been allotted to education in the Laotian budget. Even elementary instruction is confined to the chief towns of the country and to the inadequate pagoda schools. Following the success of utilizing the Khmer bonzes as intermediaries, the French tried a similar policy in Laos with much less good fortune. To begin with, it gave the monopoly of education to the bonzes in a country not by any means wholly Buddhistic. The result has been that the mountain peoples remain quite illiterate. The French, in their love of simplification and uniformity, enjoy giving to a formula, which happened to succeed under one set of circumstances, an unjustifiably universal significance. As elsewhere in Indo-China, Laos has suffered from the assimilationist tendency to train natives for menial government service, as clerks and interpreters, by means of a French programme of studies that uproots its Asiatic victims spiritually from their setting. Only in Laos, through negligence or indifference on the part of both French and Laotians, this occurred much later. In 1928, however, Pasquier, on a tour in Laos, was horrified to hear a teacher expounding to his youthful pupils such irrelevant material as the French Wars of Religion."

7: Thompson--378 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 872, 874, 177.87 France
636.87

"In 1931 the government reluctantly pulled itself together to remedy an admittedly bad situation. Certain provinces and certain bonzes were selected as fields for experimentation. An itinerant teacher was sent around to the pagoda schools to conduct model classes with a very simple programme, as a practical demonstration before the bonzes. Blackboards, textbooks, and chalk were doled out to these schools, which had heretofore lacked even such elementary equipment. Bonzes were asked to report semi-annually on the number and progress of their pupils. Slowly an examination was organized with a certificate, so as to set up some standard and to stimulate the sluggish Laotian zeal for knowledge. The problem of further training for bonzes is delicate. The idea of a small scale Normal School was again revived in 1932, and attempts were made to avoid some of the pitfalls which had doomed earlier experiments. The majority of bonzes still could not teach either reading or writing. They were less than half-hearted in falling in with the government's ideas, and would break training at the slightest provocation, thus automatically condemning their schools. The new courses are more modern in method, more prudent in application, and more successful in their results than the old, but it is too soon as yet to draw any conclusions about that elusive and infinitesimal effort known as Laotian education. Less than 300 schools teach fewer than 7,000 pupils in French Laos."